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Letter No. 2354

March 17, 1988

OUTLOOK FOR
1988 WHEAT
CROP

The winter wheat crops in the Northern Hemisphere generally appear to have come through the winter in relatively good condition, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Early indications for a number of the major wheat producers suggest that improved world prices may result in increased wheat areas for the 1988 crop. Old crop supplies continue to tighten as import demand has continued strong for the second half of the season. World stocks at the end of 1987/88 are now expected to be 151 million tons, about 15 percent less than 1986/87. Argentina and Australia have apparently committed virtually all of their exportable supplies, and Canadian exports are now expected to reach a record high. The U.S. export forecast some 48 percent above a year ago.

CHINA WHEAT
IMPORTS UP

China is expected to import 12 million 500 thousand tons of wheat in 1988, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This reflects the strong growth in domestic use of wheat and recent large purchases.

CANADA'S WHEAT
EXPORT FORECAST

Canada is forecast to export a record 22 million tons of wheat, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. With the production of high-quality wheat down in many parts of Europe and the USSR in 1987/88, Canada has a ready market for its high-quality wheat. However, much of the push in this year's export market has been sales of Canadian medium-quality wheat, with exceptionally large sales to China and Iran.

COARSE GRAIN
IMPORTERS

With the 1987/88 season's buying schedule nearly half over, and with more information on the Southern Hemisphere's exportable supplies, the coarse grain trade picture is becoming clearer. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, foreign exportable supplies of corn continue to shrink, which would lend a firmness to world prices and could stimulate demand for U.S. corn.

WORLD WHEAT
PRODUCTION

The world production of wheat for 1987/88 is estimated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at 501 million 700 thousand metric tons, down 300,000 or less than 1 percent from last month and down 5 percent from last year's record harvest.

SALES TO USSR

Private exporters reported to the U.S. Department of Agriculture export sales of 200,000 metric tons of corn for delivery to the USSR during the 1987/88 marketing year and under the fifth year of the Long Term Grain Supply Agreement. Sales of wheat and corn to the USSR for delivery during the fifth year of the agreement total 10,379,100 tons, of which wheat is 6,907,000 tons and corn is 3,472,100 tons. In addition, sales of soybeans total 813,300 tons and soybean meal, 1,300,000 tons.

WORLD OILSEEDS
PRODUCTION -
1987/88

The world production for oilseeds for 1987/88 is estimated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at a record 203 million 700 thousand tons, up less than 1 percent from last month and up almost 5 percent from last year. U.S. production is estimated at 60 million 100 thousand tons, unchanged from last month, but up 1 percent from last year. Foreign production is estimated at a record 143 million 600 thousand tons, up 1 million or less than 1 percent from last month but up 7 percent from last year.

WORLD COARSE
GRAIN
PRODUCTION

The world production for coarse grains for 1987/88 is estimated at 789 million 900 thousand tons, down 2 million 400 thousand from last month and down 5 percent from last year's crop. Important changes from a month ago include: S. Africa production estimated at 8 million 300 thousand tons, down 12 percent from last month; Argentina, estimated at 13 million 300 thousand tons, down 3 percent from last month; East Europe, 64 million 200 thousand tons, down less than 1 percent from last month; European Community, 82 million 100 thousand tons, up less than 1 percent from last month; China, 95 million 300 thousand tons, up less than 1 percent from last month.

TRADE MISSION
TO PHILIPPINES
& INDONESIA

Sec'y of Agriculture Richard Lyng announced that the first U.S. agricultural trade and development mission will be to Indonesia and the Philippines.

RED MEAT
PRODUCTION -
1987

Red meat production for the U.S. during 1987 totaled 38 billion 700 million pounds, down 2 percent from 1986, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The red meat production included beef, veal, pork, lamb and mutton slaughter in commercial establishments and on farms. Beef production amounted to 23 billion 600 million pounds, down 5 percent from 1986. Veal production was 429 million pounds, down 18 percent from 1986. Pork production was 14 billion 400 million pounds, up 2 percent from 1986. Lamb and mutton production totaled 316 million pounds, 6 percent less than 1986.

SIMBRAH CATTLE

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is adding the Simbrah Association to its list of registered cattle breed associations so that the owners of the cattle may receive a higher indemnity rate for cattle slaughtered under the USDA's brucellosis eradication program. The indemnity rate for all dairy cattle and registered beef and bison is \$250 per animal; the rate for non-registered beef and bison is \$50 per animal.

FEBRUARY
MILK
PRODUCTION

Milk production in the 21 largest dairy states totaled 9 billion 740 million pounds, 6 percent above production in these states in February 1987, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. These 21 states accounted for 85 percent of the U.S. production. Production per cow averaged 1,126 pounds, 74 more than in February 1987. The number of cows on farms in these states was 8 million 650 thousand. That's 18 thousand less than in January 1988, and 117 thousand less than in February 1987.

LYNG ON
EXPORT
PROSPECTS

In a March 16 statement before the House Subcommittee on Rural Development, Agriculture, and Related Agencies, Sec'y of Agriculture Richard Lyng said: "Export prospects are improving. More competitive prices as a result of the provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985, reduction in the exchange value of the dollar, expanded export programs, and other factors are increasing the U.S. share of the world agricultural export market. U.S. export volume increased to 129 million metric tons in fiscal 1987, up from just under 110 million in 1986, and exports are expected to climb again in fiscal 1988 to 143 million tons."

FROM OUR RADIO
SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1607... (Weekly 13½ min documentary) Now's the time of year to start planning for a golf course lawn. There are several steps that homeowners can take now to get that lawn off to a great start. On this edition of AGRICULTURE USA, George Holmes interviews one of the leading experts in lawn care, USDA turf specialist James Murray.

AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1595... (Weekly reel of news features) USDA news highlights; Bollweevil wars; Breast milk available; Agricultural reform in the EC; Crop insurance.

CONSUMER TIME #1087... (Weekly reel of 2½-3 min features) Nontoxic pest controls; Organic gardening; Cancer and your diet; Computer gardening; Breast feeding therapy.

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE... Thurs, Mar. 17, Ag outlook; Fri, Mar. 18, Cattle on feed and catfish report; Mon, Mar. 21, World ag outlook; Tues, Mar. 22, Weekly weather and crop summary. Dial the USDA National News Line 202-488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 p.m. ET each working day.

TELEVISION SERVICE programs, A BETTER WAY, DOWN TO EARTH, AGRICULTURAL UPDATE and SATELLITE NEWS are available on satellite Westar IV, audio 6.2 or 6.8 as follows:

Thursdays... AG UPDATE/SATELLITE NEWS, 7:30-7:45 p.m. ET... Transponder 12D

Saturdays... A BETTER WAY, 10:00-10:30 a.m. ET... Transponder 9X
ORIGINAL DOWN TO EARTH, 10:30-11:00 a.m. ET... Transponder 9X
UPLINK SATELLITE NEWS/AG UPDATE, 11:00-11:15 a.m. ET... Transponder 9X

Mondays... A BETTER WAY, 8:00-8:30 a.m. ET... Transponder 12D
REPEAT DOWN TO EARTH, 8:30-9:00 a.m. ET... Transponder 12D
UPLINK SATELLITE NEWS/AG UPDATE, 9:00-9:15 a.m. ET... Transponder 12D

A BETTER WAY is also available on The Learning Channel SATCOM 3R, Transponder 2, Audio 6.8 each Thursday at 10:30 a.m. ET.

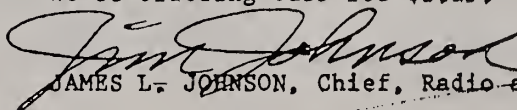
OFF MIKE

Alan Stennett (BBC Radio Lincolnshire, England) arrived in Washington, D.C. for a week's visit. It will be the wind up of 10-week visit to the U.S. Several of you met him and showed him around your area, and he was most impressed both with what he saw and the hospitality he received. He had some interesting insights into farm broadcasting in this country and of American agriculture in general. Another welcome visitor in the office this week (and a totally unexpected one) was Gary Stewart (Northwest Ag News Net, Seattle, WA). Gary was in town with wheat people from his part of the country, and the trip came on rather suddenly. So, he didn't have time to warn us. We had to laugh when we read the latest newsletter from Bob Bosold (WAXX, Eau Claire, WI). He talked about a celebrity cook-off he competed in recently, and as he reported: "My recipe was a quiche that I made, put in the oven and let get a little dark around the edges. It's tough cooking and being on the air. My opponents just stood by the oven watching it get

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darker and darker, while I was doing remotes and unable to get to my oven. Oh Well!!" End of comment. Ellen Grant is no longer at WSMI, Litchfield, IL. When we called to set up a live feed of the British Ag Minister's press conference Monday, we talked to Kevin Olsen who is handling the farm broadcasting duties at the station. In case you missed it, the latest edition of Agri Marketing magazine contains an article by NAFB President Dix Harper (WRAL-TV/Tobacco Net, Raleigh, NC). The article is titled "Catering to the Farmers' Needs." Dix quotes a number of farm broadcasters and how they're doing just that. Coffee conversation note for golfers: At least one pro golfer is offering logo space on his cap visor for \$125,000. We're offering ours for \$1,250.


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